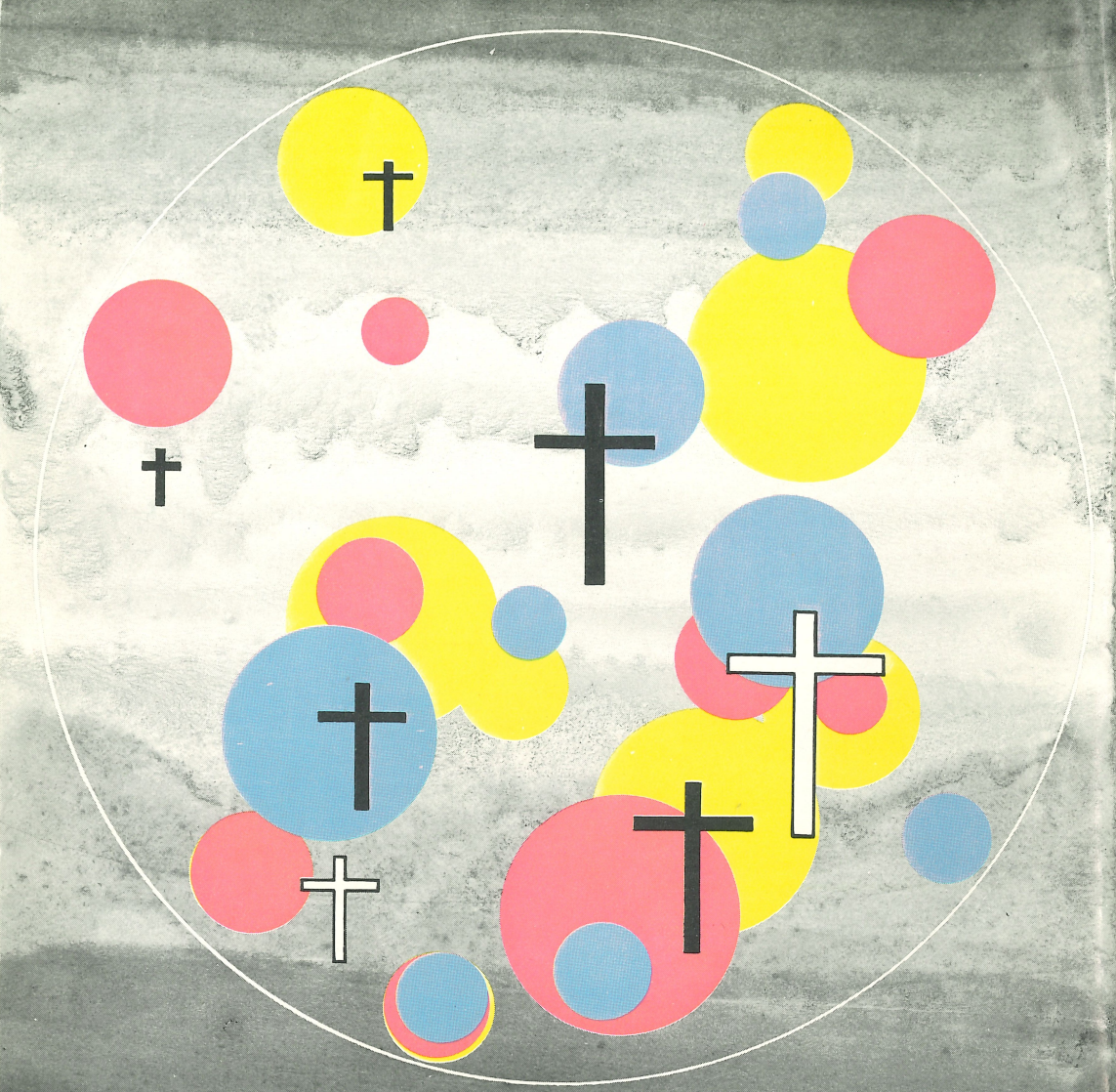
Medical Missionary

The Culture of Venezuela—May - June, 1961



CHARITY SHOULD BE AS VAST AS THE WORLD;

it should be extended to all, as the grace of God is extended to all; it should be offered not only to those who are already our brothers, but to all that they may become our brothers. Thus all our charity is brotherly love, and includes all the members of Christ. Extend thy charity over the entire earth if thou wilt love Christ; for the members of Christ are everywhere in the world. If thou lovest only a part, thou are divided. For when members love one another, the body loves itself; and there shall be One Christ loving Himself.

(St. Augustine, *In epist. ad Parthos*)

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the Medical Missionary

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The Medical Mission Sisters, founded in 1925, *by Mother Anna Dengel, M.D. in Washington, D.C., are a religious congregation, dedicated to the care of the sick in the missions. The Sisters staff hospitals in India, Africa, Pakistan, S. Vietnam and South America. American Provincialate*: 8400 *Pine Rd., Philadelphia* 11, *Pa.*

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Throwing the Net, Near Maracaibo, Venezuela

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Sister M. Florence, R. N.

Medical Mission Sisters conduct three Catholic hospitals in Venezuela: the modern 164-bed Our Lady of Coromoto Hospital in Maracaibo (above) opened in 1951; Sagrada Familia Hospital, Caripito; and Sagrada Familia Hospital, Judibana.

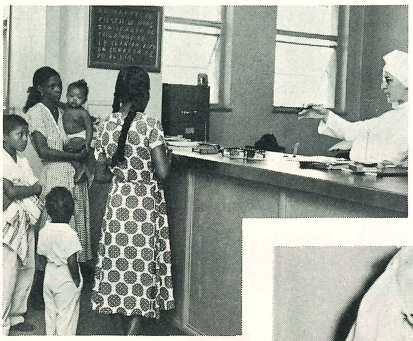
For the last ten years, the Medical Mission Sisters at Our Lady of Coromoto Hospital have given their services to Maracaibo and the surrounding areas, opening their doors and hearts to receive all in need of medical care. During these years there has been a notable increase in the number of patients cared for. For example, 4,905 patients were hospitalized in 1960, as compared to 1,054 in 1951, or four times as many. In the clinics, in 1951, only 17,000 outpatients were attended, while in 1960, 49,052 were treated—almost three times as many as before. During this time new and modern equipment has been introduced, enabling the patients to recover more rapidly—among these, the most outstanding are the Iron Lung, the latest equipment for heart surgery, and in the near future, an eyebank will be opened in the hospital, which will serve as a center for the whole of Venezuela.

The idea of Coromoto Hospital was conceived in 1951 when Creole Petroleum Corporation decided to make available adequate medical care for their employees. They built the hospital and equipped it. However, they were faced with the problem of staffing an institution too large for their own needs. It was then decided to seek a community of Sisters who were trained in hospital administration and who would assume the complete responsibility for the hospital so that it could be converted into a hospital for the general public—and open to all. The Medical Mission Sisters of Philadelphia then took over this work. The name of the hospital was then changed from "Creole" to one which was chosen in honor of the patroness of Venezuela, "Our Lady of Coromoto." The Hospital has become an integral part of the life of the city which it serves.

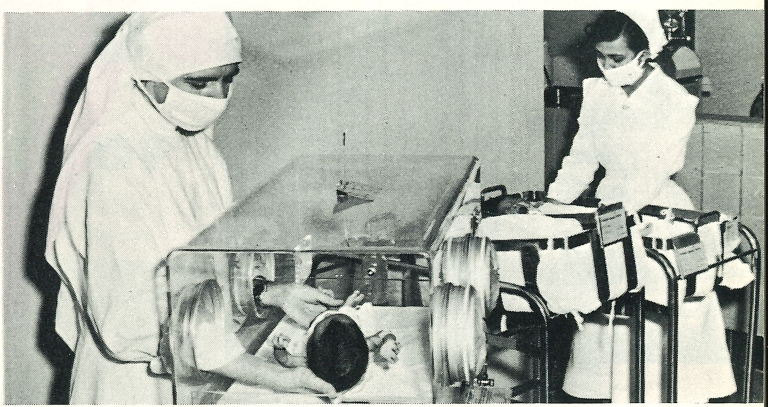
Daily, the Hospital of Our Lady of Coromoto reflects the love of God through the Sisters' charity to the sick and suffering. This has always been the principle objective of the Sisters: To show forth to the world the CHARITY OF CHRIST!

10th Anniversary in Venezuela

Sister M. Florence, R. N.



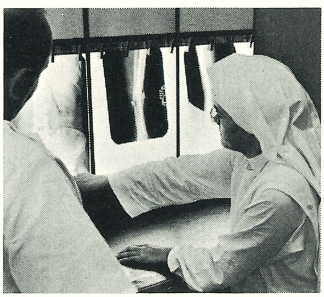
(Above) Sr. M. Jeanne in Out-Patient Department, Coromoto Hospital, Maracaibo.



(Right) Sr. M. Florence, the superior, with premature baby in the nursery.

Modern and well-equipped pharmacy.

Sr. Miriam, administrator for the last 10 years



X-ray is important for diagnoses.

Poor home in Central Venezuela

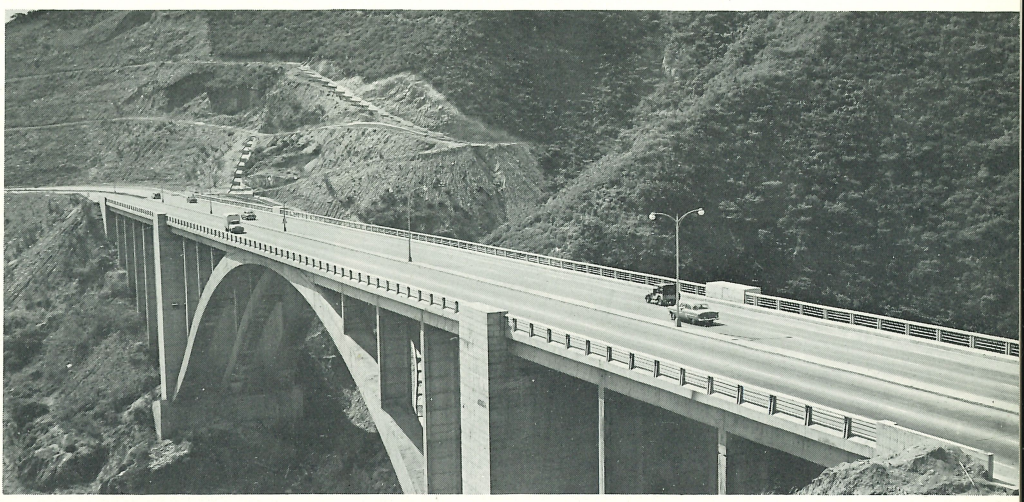
The latest in modern apartments in Caracas, a city of 1,000,000.

Ven

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, sailing between the island of Trinidad and the South American mainland on his third voyage to the New World, discovered the land later christened Venezuela on August 1, 1498. "I anchored in a river," wrote Columbus in his Journal, "and many people came out and told me that they called this land Paria." Thus the Peninsula of Paria on the northeastern tip of South America was the first place on the American continent where Europeans landed, according to Samuel E. Morison, eminent authority on the voyages of Columbus.

Upon reaching the vast delta of the Orinoco River, which he described as a "fresh-water sea," Columbus concluded that the lush green lowlands were the Earthly Paradise because, he wrote, "all men say that it is at the end of the Orient, and that is where we are." Convinced that he had finally reached a part of India, Columbus sent a glowing report of his discovery to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain. "In this blessed land," he wrote, "I found the

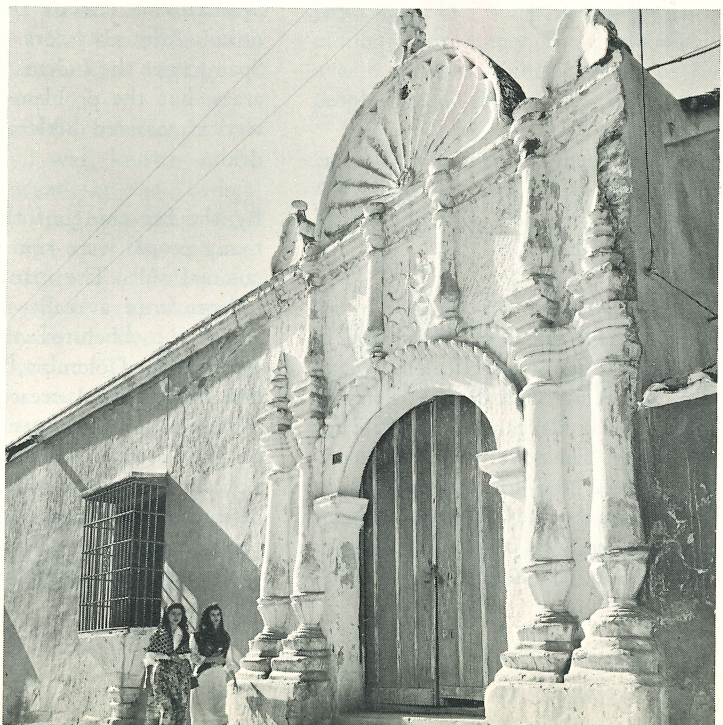
Modern highway connects Caracas, capital of Venezuela, with seacoast.



ezuela

LAND OF CONTRAST

Fine example of colonial architecture in Coro (one of the oldest churches in South America.)



mildest climate and the lands and trees very green and as beautiful as in April in the gardens of Valencia . . . and the people there are of a lovely stature and many wear pieces of gold around their necks and some have pearls wound around their arms. These are great proofs that this is the Earthly Paradise."

This news touched off a frenzied quest for pearls and for the fabled city of El Dorado by the Spaniards who followed Columbus. First among them were Amerigo Vespucci and Alonso de Ojeda, whose expedition along the shores of the Caribbean led to the discovery of Lake Maracaibo and the naming of the land. Upon discovering the Indian villages built on piles in the Lake of Maracaibo they called it "Little Venice" because

it reminded them of the city of Venice. A short time afterwards this name was changed to Venezuela and applied to the entire mainland.

Soon the shores of the Caribbean became famous as the Pearl Coast and in 1507 the first Spanish settlement Neuva Cadiz, was established on the island of Cubagua (near Margarita) as a base for pearl fishing. The government of colonial Venezuela was first established in Villa de Santa Ana de Coro, the first city founded in the West by Juan de Ampues or Ampies on July 26, 1527. In 1546 the capital was moved to El Tocuyo, in the recently discovered provinces in the interior of the country.

In 1527 Carlos V gave Venezuela to the famous banking family of Welzer Brothers of Augsburg, known in our history by the name of Belzares or Welzares, to guarantee and amortize a loan. Later, in 1546, the Crown recovered the government of this province, which was later called the Captaincy General of Venezuela, made up of the provinces and governing bodies of Cumana, Guayana, Maracaibo, Margarita, Trinidad and Venezuela. Caracas was founded in 1567 by Captain Diego de Losada and years later, due to the excellence of its climate and its advantageous geographic position, the government was established there, becoming the definite capital of the province in 1577.

For approximately the next four centuries Spain ruled most of Latin America, but colonization went slowly in Venezuela, which was regarded by the Spaniards as one of their poorest colonies. Administrators sent out from Spain drove the Indians from the coastal areas, but the problems of the Spanish settlers received little attention in Madrid.

By the beginning of the 19th century many people were ripe for revolt from colonial rule. The man who made this independence a reality was Simon Bolivar who liberated the republics of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Panama and created the Republic of Bolivia. Bolivar was born in Caracas on July 24th, 1783. For nearly 20 years Bolivar and others who longed for independence planned, fought and suffered exile—then returned and fought again—until a series of almost incredible

The tempo of life in some places reflects the traditional Spanish mode of living.

Native instruments accompany the Venezuelan joropo: small harp; maracas; and a cuatro (small four-string guitar).

victories over the forces of the Spanish Empire freed much of Latin America from Spanish rule by the middle of the 1820's. Bolivar created the Republic of Gran Colombia, made up of what is now Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Panama, which at that date was a part of New Granada. Gran Colombia disintegrated in 1830 and the autonomous existence of Venezuela then began.

At the middle of the nineteenth century, after a civil war, known as the "five year revolution" or the "Federal Revolution," a federal form of government was formed, and the country named the United States of Venezuela. Its federal territory, by the decree of 1864 was composed of twenty states and a federal district. The Constitutional reform put into effect in 1953 changed the name of the country to the Republic of Venezuela.

The Venezuelan People

Venezuela is the sixth largest country in South America. It is as large as Texas and Oklahoma combined. It is larger than any country in Europe, excluding Russia. It has very few cities. Venezuela has room enough and the potential riches to support a population of about fifty million people. Thirty years ago there were no more than 3.5 million; but today the population is over 6 million. Eighty percent of these people live in the coastal regions.

The people of Venezuela today are made up of descendants of the Spanish settlers, of the aboriginal Indians, of Africans, brought in during colonial days, of Europeans and North Americans. Spanish, of course, is the language of the country, but words in many tongues can be heard on the streets of modern Caracas.

Venezuela is a Catholic country, but freedom of religion is guaranteed in the Constitution and churches of major faiths are found in Caracas. While 93%

of the people are Catholic, there is a tremendous shortage of priests. This situation has existed there since the fight for the republic a century ago. In the whole of Venezuela there are today only about 1,351 priests for its six million people. Some parishes have as many as 16,900 parishioners, or more; one or two have as many as 40,000 persons, with only one or two priests to attend them. If a national clergy had been prepared by the Spanish clergy, when they left after the founding of the republic, others would have been ready to take over. However, there is steady improvement in this regard.

As in all Latin American countries today, although most of the people are nominally Catholic, yet in some parts of the country, only a small percentage attend Sunday Mass. While the reasons for this are many and varied, including poverty and great distance, the major cause of it is religious ignorance. It is estimated that 70% of all Latin American Catholics do not know the fundamentals and duties of our Faith. This condition exists among the illiterate, but also among the educated, who have not received an adequate religious education. Communism, secularism and materialism all thrive in this milieu.

The Culture

Venezuela has an illustrious cultural tradition, ranking among the first countries in Latin America. Numerous writers, philosophers, political writers, orators, newspapermen, poets and novelists have earned international fame for Venezuela. However, the cultural aspect which has distinguished Venezuela the most is undoubtedly its painting. A manifestation of typical Venezuelan art is the "Retablo de Maravillas," a theatrical group of dancers and actors under the supervision of the Department of Culture and Social Welfare of the Ministry of Labor, who have performed and have been praised in various foreign countries.

Life in Venezuela

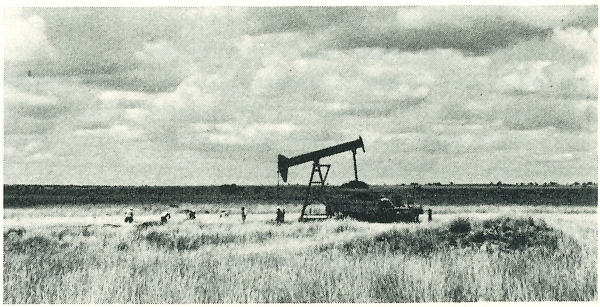
There is nothing sleepy or antiquated about life in the changing Venezuela of today, for the Venezuelans are moving at an ever faster pace toward bigger and better goals in almost every phase of life and in all parts of the country. Yet, one can still find the old and the new existing side by side, whether it be architecture, home life, entertainment, shopping or transportation.

Caracas, the capital is, of course, the most striking example of the transition from the old to the new. Here, as in other metropolitan capitals of the Continent, new hotels and office buildings are the latest word in architecture and modern conveniences. Despite the energy and drive with which the *Caraquenos* are transforming the capital of the country, the tempo of their life still reflects the traditional Spanish mode of gracious leisurely living.

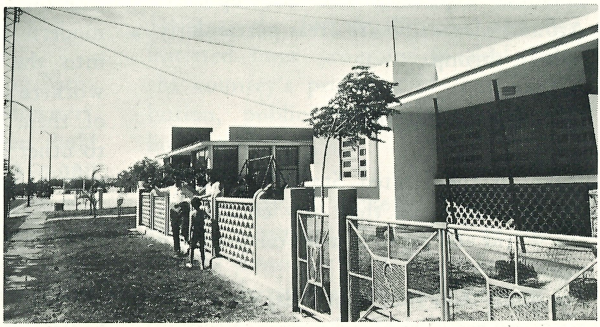
Fiestas

Modern progress has not eliminated such deep-rooted observances as the celebration of Epiphany on the sixth of January, when groups representing the Three Kings of the Orient sing the praises of the Christ Child, in the streets of cities and villages alike; and the traditional carnaval preceding Lent, a gay and colorful spectacle, where all social classes masquerade and parade in the streets together, with a display of elaborate "floats" depicting favorite subjects of national folklore. In addition to the religious and patriotic festivals

celebrated universally, different regions of the country have fiestas of special local significance. All reveal the character of the Venezuelan people—their deep religious feeling, their spontaneous gayety, sense of humor, and intensely human qualities.



Producing well near San Tome, Venezuela.



Oil workers' new homes, Amuay Refinery.

Oil worker and family, Eastern Venezuela.

Music and Folklore

Venezuela has a wealth of folk music and dances of Spanish, Indian, and African origin. The gay, syncopated *joropo* is the national dance of Venezuela and one sees it danced throughout the country. Spanish in origin, and Venezuelan in feeling, it is generally danced with native instruments including *maracas* made of dried gourd shells; a small harp; and the *cuatro,* a small four-string guitar. One of the many regional dances is called *Los Diablos Danzantes de Yare,* which is performed every year on Corpus Christi Day in the State of Miranda.

Agriculture

Forty-five percent of the people of Venezuela still live an agricultural or rural life. Crops grown chiefly for domestic consumption are sugar, cotton sesame, tobacco, corn, rice, yams, beans and other vegetables and a wide variety of fruits, but coffee is Venezuela's most important agricultural export commodity followed by cacao.

Coffee plantations cover some 838,000 acres of Venezuelan soil, distributed among 70,000 or more plantations in 16 of the 20 states. When coffee prices dropped in 1930, production became unprofitable and declined, but the improved world market for coffee in recent years has greatly stimulated production. The fishing industry also represents a very important economic branch in Venezuela's economy and during recent years has experienced considerable expansion and development. Around Maracaibo are areas particularly rich in shrimp.

Oil in Venezuela

Next to the United States, Venezuela produces more oil than any country in the world and exports more oil than any nation, bar none!

For more than four centuries, the greatest treasures of the land remained undiscovered—hidden beneath the waters of Lake Maracaibo. Then a new era of rediscovery began for Venezuela in the first decades of the twentieth century. Geologists discovered in the steaming Maracaibo basin the "liquid gold" of vast petroleum deposits, now estimated to comprise between six and seven percent of the world's total reserves. This product literally changed the face and the outlook of the country. It has had a most profound effect on the country as a whole and upon the people as individuals. Since the government had no money to develop the oil, foreign companies were welcomed and the terms of land lease were made as inviting as possible.

Largest of the foreign oil companies is the Creole Petroleum Corporation. Creole has invested more than $1½ billions in Venezuela, — the largest of any U.S. concern in a foreign country.

For the past 15 years profits from oil have been split on a basis which guaranteed the government of Venezuela a minimum of 50%. Since 1958, because of a boost in taxes, the government, in effect, now gets 60% of the oil profits. The government of Venezuela reinvests a large proportion of its income from oil in public works to expand the economy. This is its major source of money for schools, hospitals, public housing.

The oil companies also have introduced modern housing and hospital benefits into the lives of the Venezuelan oil workers and their families. The impact of these benefits reached beyond them to other segments of the population. It was in line with this broad community policy that Creole built three hospitals, which are leased and administered as community hospitals open to all by the Medical Mission Sisters in Venezuela today.

Today oil production has reached the rate of over 3 million barrels a day; and brings the government $2,400,000 a day, giving Venezuela the highest per capita income on the hemisphere—$800 a year.

Today's Problems

Impressive as this may be, Venezuela is still one of the poorer nations. The flood of oil royalties into the national treasury gave rise to inflation and with the shift of the workers from the rural to the oil fields and urban centers (often to sit idle) the whole economy of the country was disrupted. Leaving the fields untilled behind them, people were no longer able to supply their own needs and wants. In 1959 the country spent $152 millions to import such staples as wheat, corn, rice and meat. Imported eggs alone cost Venezuela

$30,000 a day. And the oil economy prices are among the highest in the world. It costs around $16,000 a year for a middle-class family to live in Caracas. The wealth of the country is greatly out of balance. Two million or one-third of all Venezuelans are outside the money economy entirely. In 1949, 35% of the working force of Venezuela received 80% of the national income and the remaining 65% of the people struggled to live on the little they received. The cost of living has doubled since then.

There are other problems facing Venezuela today. 1) Large landowners, 9% of the farming population hold 74% of the farming land. Some 350,000 peasant families have neither land nor work. 2) About 25% of housing in Caracas, 50% of housing in other cities and 99% of rural housing must be replaced. 3) Urban employment is rising with growth of population. 4) The country still needs 30,000 more hospital beds, which the health authorities estimate as the minimum required to take care of the present population.

Education is perhaps the most important need in the 20th century Venezuela. While there has been much progress, Venezuela has not been able to create overnight a school system adequate for the entire school-age population. More than half the population is still illiterate. More schools must be built. More teachers must be trained. Within a few years it is hoped that every child will be able to receive a public school education at least through the sixth grade.

In February, 1959, Venezuela's freely elected president—Romulo Betancourt, took office. Already the Betancourt government has paid off $750 million of the country's debts incurred by Perez Jiminez, the former dictator, and has initiated huge programs to deal with the country's problems of land distribution, public health, education and housing.

* * *

"Technology has rocketed Venezuela into a new country . . . Just as she is ripping down her cities to make streets wide enough for automobiles, she is demolishing an ancient culture to accommodate new economic patterns and class structures. The wreckers have left ugly piles of rubble, to be replaced, they say, by noble creations. Whether the new cities or the new ways will actually be better than the old ones remains to be seen. But Venezuela no more than the world has any choice. She must destroy and rebuild. Fortunately, she seems to have the material to work with."

(Marsland)

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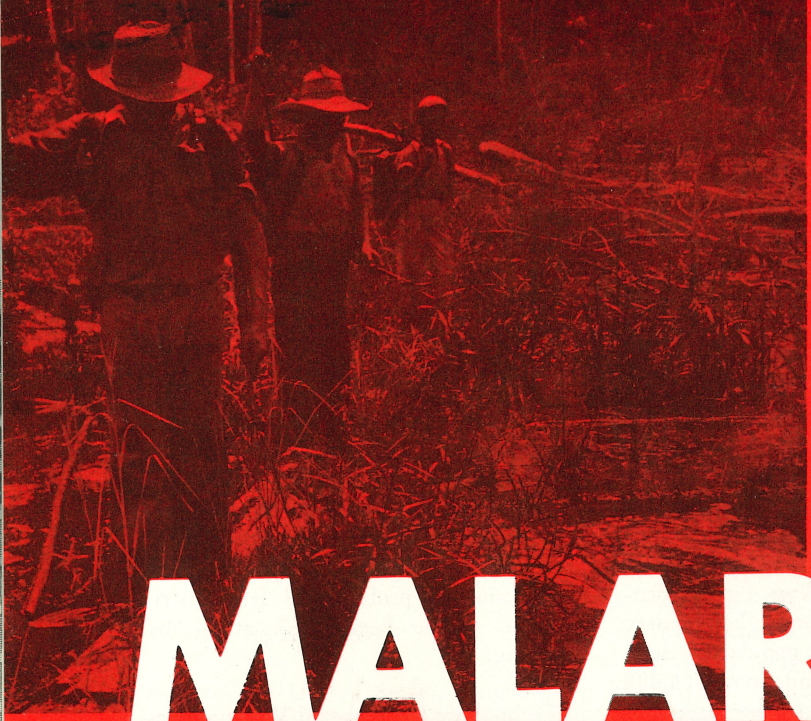
PRIZES — GAMES
REFRESHMENTS
ENTERTAINMENT

JUNE 9th and 10th, 1961



Anti-Malaria workers in Venezuela spraying oil on a swamp in an effort to kill mosquito larvae.

Sister Miriam, B. S. N.

MALARIA

IF anyone were to ask the younger generation of Venezuelans what they considered to be the greatest recent accomplishment in their country, the first reaction might be to name something apparent, modern and "material." But, in putting the question to those who lived in the Country prior to the year 1936, one might get a more thoughtful and different response.

This latter group will remember very vividly that just as recently as the year 1951 malaria was killing off a large percentage of the population of Venezuela each year, that it was keeping even more in a debilitated condition, that thousands were kept from their work annually, and that, as a result, the Country must suffer, not only physically, but economically as well.

For centuries the tiny malaria parasite has been carried from an infected human to a healthy one by an innocent looking carrier, the female Anopholese mosquito, who must bite because she needs two blood meals to be able to develop her

Victim of Malaria, black line showing his enlarged spleen.

*Report on Malaria Eradication in Venezuela, 2nd. Venezuelan Congress of Public Health, February, 1961.

eggs. And she has done this so often that it is said that malaria inflicted greater losses on the armies of Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar than did their enemies . . . knocked out 90% of U. S. forces in New Guinea early in World War II . . . and probably can take credit for having wiped out whole civilizations in Central America, Yucatan, Cambodia and Ceylon.

Up until recent years, "Malaria in Venezuela was the greatest public health obstacle to economic and social development of the 570,031 square miles which is the total area of the country, 65% or 375,000 square miles was attacked by malaria with an intensity never equalled proportionately in any of the other 20 republics of this hemisphere."* In Venezuela, it was estimated that in the year 1936 malaria was the primary cause of death; and that ordinarily in one year 25% of the population was suffering from it, and that the annual death rate in some places was 300 for every 100,000; and in others as high as 500 or even 1,000.

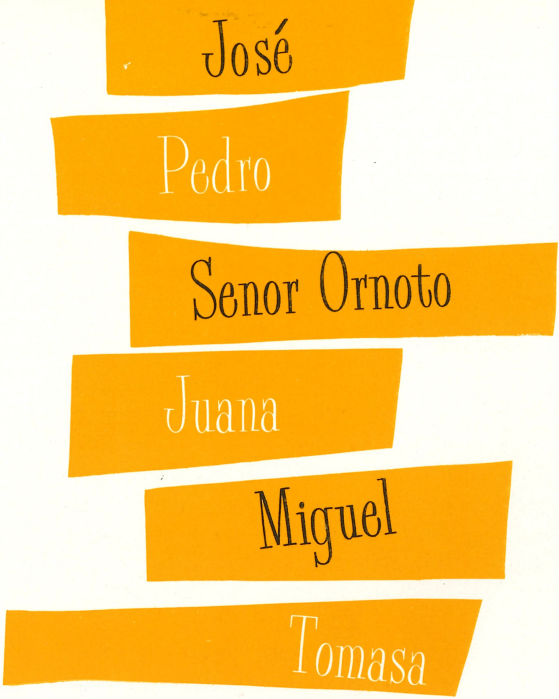
In an effort to see what might be done to control this problem in 1936, Dr. Arnoldo Gabaldon (and associates, Dr. Arturo Luis Berti, Dr. Lacenio Guerrero and Dr. G. Garcia Martin) then head of the Division of Malariology under the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Venezuela, undertook a very ambitious campaign to eradicate malaria. As soon as DDT was produced commercially, Venezuela was the first country to employ it for malarial control on a national scale. This campaign was begun in 1945. The objective was "the eradication of malaria" through "the protection of the homes in the malarial zones." This objective has been realized. It is commendable to note that for its size Venezuela is the third country in the world to attain this objective and the first country to eradicate it from its "tropical zones."

The entire Country, and everything in it, was sprayed, either by anti-malarial teams or, in the unpopulated areas, by small airplanes. Today, all buildings and houses wear a little "DDT" number to show that they have been subjected to the "treatment." Nobody ever objects to this additional "decoration" on their home, because it has meant a real liberation, in every sense of the word. The chills, fever and debilitation of twenty-four years ago are no longer present. The percentage for malaria has now dropped to the all-time low of 4.2% and a death from malaria is unheard of. A truly great accomplishment!

R. I. P.

Please pray for our benefactors recently deceased:

Most Rev. John Collins, S.M.A., Monrovia, Liberia
Rev. Victor Courtois, S.J., Calcutta, India
Rev. James E. Quinn, Lafayette, Indiana
Brother J. P. Auguste Couture, C.S.C., Quebec
Mr. Barney Burkart, New Orleans, La.
(Father of Sr. M. Julia, S.C.M.M.)
Mr. George A. Clune, Norwich, Conn.
Mrs. Margaret Cronin, Roanoke, Virginia
Miss Florence Dwight, Baltimore, Md.
Mrs. Phyllis Flieger, Brooklyn, N.Y.
(Mother of Sr. M. Laetitia, S.C.M.M.)
Mr. James E. Geary, M.M.M., Wash. D.C.
Mrs. Catherine Huster, Catonsville, Md.
Mr. Cuthbert Pritchard, Brazil, S.A.
(Father of Sr. M. Victoria, S.C.M.M.)
Mr. Bernard Roache, Elmhurst, N.Y.
(Father of Sr. M. Renee, S.C.M.M.)
Mrs. Alice Ryan, Haverford, Pa.
Mrs. Katherine Sieber, Wheeling, W. Va.
Mr. Joseph Tucci, Washington, D.C.
Mrs. Amelia Wahl, Phila., Pa.



THIS IS

Venezuela was a name that I could never pronounce when my geography teacher asked for the oil-producing country of South America. It meant no more to me than a tiny spot on the map with a bit of the Andes range on one side and Orinoco lowlands on the other.

Then when I was assigned to Caripito, in Western Venezuela, it suddenly became a land to be studied, a language to be learned, customs and ways of life to be absorbed and made a part of one's everyday being, pictures of hospitals and homes and surroundings so different from what I had always known.

But now that I am here, how differently I see it. Oh, it is that same land of oil, only with breath-taking landscapes that change from the towering mountain peaks of the Andes, to the lush green plains of the "llanos" and again to the dry and sandy oil-fields and to a hundred other variations in between these three extremes. It is that same land—but now one of exotic and rare beautiful flowers, orchids, bountiful vegetation and swaying palm trees.

But much more than that! Venezuela is a people . . . a Latin-tempered and sensitive people, a simple and natural people, a religious and lovable people who find their way into your heart without the slightest effort. Now, when I think of Venezuela, the spot on the map is a face, a heart, a soul of one of these.

. . . It is the worn face of Senor Oporto, a little gentleman of fifty years, though he could easily pass for seventy-five or more. I see him, weak and ill as he is, sitting up in bed to speak whenever a Sister enters the room, as it would be discourteous to remain lying down while one speaks.

It is the face of three-year-old Miguel, rosy-cheeked and runny-nosed from the cold of the Andes, as he timidly approaches the little holy card I hold out to him. Not daring to hope the treasure is to be his, he approaches it

Sister M. Blaise with Tomasa at Sagrada Familia Hospital, Caripito.

VENEZUELA TO ME

Sister M. Blaise, R. N.

with hands behind his back, holding up his face to kiss it.

. . . It is the tired but ever-smiling face of Juana as she brings one of her twelve children to the charity clinic. As poor as she is, she brings an egg or an orange for the Sister in the clinic in gratitude for the medicine and treatment she receives.

. . . It is the little old wrinkled face of Jose who is seventy-eight and dying of cancer. He had never made his first Holy Communion so Father gives him a few lessons; and now he is ready to receive. We take him to chapel in his wheelchair and he sits straight up with eyes closed and hands in front of him and looking at the Host says out loud, "*Oh Dios, mi Diosito!*" (Oh God, my little God!); but he uses a familiar form of the word *Dios* which brings a smile to all our faces.

. . . It is the pale unhappy little face of Tomasa, an emaciated and unloved little orphan that brightens and smiles with the least sign of affection. How she changes to a happy little girl in her adopted family, can hardly be described for the change is so great.

. . . It is the grateful face of Juan, who comes to say simply that he will do whatever we want him to do.We saved his life and he will work the rest of his life in gratitude for what we have done. He came to us walking all the way from the *campos* (plains) pale and weak from several days fight against dysentery. As he was standing in X-ray to have a chest film taken before admitting him for treatment, Sister told him to take a deep breath and hold it. He took a deep breath and fainted from the effort. It was twenty-four hours later when he regained consciousness enough to know where he was.

It is the faces of these and thousands more like them that make Venezuela something real and living. So the people of every land become a real and living part of every missionary until all are merged in one land, one kingdom, the KINGDOM OF GOD.

Pilgrimage to Guanare

Sister M. de Sales, B. S.

IT was six a.m. on the morning of September 8th, when four of us left for the Pilgrimage to Guanare in the central part of Venezuela. Since the trip from Maracaibo was an anticipated-long-one, we had previously made arrangements to spend the night across the lake at Lagunillas (a three hour trip) rather than take the chance of getting to Guanare very late at night. So on the 7th, at about four in the afternoon, after all of us had completed the last minute details of work, we met in the chapel to sing a hymn to Our Lady of Coromoto for the success of the Pilgrimage to her shrine.

The gold reliquary at the Basilica in Guanare, containing the venerated image of Our Lady of Coromoto, patroness of Venezuela.

We arrived in Guanare at 8 p.m. on Wednesday after a hot and dusty ride with only one mishap along the way—a flat tire. It happened right on the curve of the road near the top of one of the few mountains we climbed. Fortunately this delayed us only fifteen minutes since directly behind us in a truck was a young man who, before we knew it, had removed the tire and changed it. Our Lady was caring for us.

Guanare is a town located in the west central part of Venezuela on the southeast side of the Andes. It has a population of about 15,000, an altitude of 549 feet and a median temperature of 26.5 C. The people are of a mixture of Spanish and Indian blood.

In all Latin American towns there is a plaza where one can be sure of finding a Church. Guanare is no exception. The Church here has the rank of a minor basilica. The Altar and its background is typical 16th century colonial style with white and gold scroll trim. High above the tabernacle in the center niche is a statue of Our Lady of Coromoto. The tabernacle, made of solid silver construction is exceptionally large about two feet wide and four feet or more high. The basilica however was not completed until 1790.

The image of Our Lady of Coromoto is kept in a gold reliquary on the side altar where she may be seen at any time the basilica is open. Because the image is small, about the size of a thumb nail, it is kept under a magnifying glass which gives the impression of a picture about one and a half inches in size. This helps one to see the image although due to certain light reflections on the glass it is necessary to study and view the image for several minutes in order to absorb the detail.

In the four days we were in Guanare we had ample time to examine the image. On one occasion we were fortunate in looking at it when a lady who had a flashlight was present. With it we were able to see it in more detail. The image is the same as she appears traditionally on all the holy cards, seated on a throne holding the Child Jesus.

The story of the apparition is this: during the time of the Spanish entry into South America, there was a tribe of Indians in the area of what is now known as Guanare. The name of the tribe was "Cospes." Within the tribe was an important branch or clan by the name of "Coromoto." It was in the latter part of 1652 that the Chief of the clan of Coromotos, with his wife, was walking peacefully in the mountains when they came to a small river or creek. Here they saw a vision of a very beautiful woman holding a child. She appeared to be standing on the water of the creek. While they gazed with wonder at her she spoke to them in their own language and told them to "go to the priests, who will pour water over your heads so that you may go to heaven." Her words were so persuasive and so forceful that the Indians had no other thought but to comply with his wishes. They related what they had seen and heard to the clan.

Instructions were begun for the clan of the Coromotos by Spanish Friars and the Chief entered into the lessons with much enthusiasm. However, little by little the chief yearned for the solitary life of the forest and finally he did not wish to receive baptism. When the time came for baptizing the Indians, the Friars invited all to participate in the prayers and ceremonies but the Chief refused and with his family left the encampment the night of September

8th, 1652. While all were sleeping, Our Lady appeared again to the chief. Because he thought she had come to reproach him, he was filled with hate and broke the silence by asking her why she continued to persecute him, telling her he did not wish to do as she had commanded him. His words so mortified his wife that she told him not to talk to the "beautiful woman" in such a manner. This so infuriated the chief that he drew his bow and arrow, but just as he aimed his arrow at the lady, to shoot, the lady disappeared. The family beholding the chief on his knees with his arms outstretched, one hand open and the other closed, asked him what he held gripped in his hand. It was the image of the Virgin, just as she had appeared to him. This is the image that is today preserved for all to venerate in the Basilica of Guanare.

The devotion and faith of the Indians in this area was implanted by the direct intervention of the Mother of God and devotion to her is uppermost in the minds of the people.
Since Our Lady appeared many times to the Indians in and around the area of Guanare, several monuments have been erected. Two of these are commonly accepted as the place of the first two apparitions. On Thursday afternoon we visited the place of the second apparition. The monument there consists of a stone altar with a plaque representing the Virgin on a throne with the Child seated on her lap. The altar is located in a clearing surrounded by very tall trees and behind it a short distance is a creek called the *Quebrada de la Virgen* (The Creek of the Virgin). While three of us remained here for the afternoon, the other two decided to walk to the site of the first apparition. On inquiry some said the distance was three and a half to four miles. On their return, three and a half hours later, we decided that it was five or six miles.

They had truly made a pilgrimage! Through mud, ankle-deep in many places, over two creeks and almost the entire way through jungle they had pushed along until they reached the site of the first apparition. When darkness closed in about six p.m., we who were waiting for them began to get a bit worried. Finally, they made their appearance, a tired, muddy, bedraggled pair. Nevertheless, they both agreed that it was worth all the effort.

Saturday the 11th of September, which has only recently been named as the official Feast of Our Lady of Coromoto, arrived. It was our last in Guanare and an eventful one. We attended several Masses at the basilica terminated by Solemn High Mass at 9 a.m. In the evening a candle-light procession of all the pilgrims was the highlight of the Feast. Each group carried their own flag in honor of Our Lady and proceeded in very orderly fashion through the streets of Guanare to the other end of the town to a huge monument of Our Lady of Coromoto. At the rear of the procession came the Bishop of Barquisimeto followed by the reliquary containing the image of the Virgin.

When all were at the monument the Bishop addressed a few words to the people and then gave solemn benediction with the image of the Virgin. The procession then started on its return route ending at the basilica about nine p.m. This ended our four day stay in Guanare. We all agreed that it was a very fitting climax. The love, and devotion and honor shown Our Lady was more than edifying and we left Guanare feeling that our pilgrimage would reap many spiritual results.

Venezuela's First Cardinal

It was only in August, 1960 that His Eminence Jose Humberto Quintero was raised from Auxiliary Bishop to be named Archbishop of Caracas. He took formal possession of the new See in October, 1960. Scarcely two months later, on January 16, 1961, His Holiness John XXIII honored him with the Cardinal's hat as the first Cardinal of Venezuela. All Venezuela rejoiced with him in this new honor for them and for their bishop. Thousands of officials and civilians thronged the streets of Caracas to welcome him home after receiving the Red Hat.

Jose Cardinal Quintero was born on September 22, 1902 in Mucuchies, a small Andean mountain village high up in the shadow of the Merida Sierra Nevada. After five years at the Merida seminary, he studied Theology and Canon Law at the Gregorian University in Rome, and was ordained in 1926. For three years he was a parish priest, and then was named Secretary to the Merida Archbishopry, next, Vicar General, and Director of Army chaplains. Besides his ordinary parochial work he was also a professor of philosophy at various Merida *Liceos*, and authored many books, historical and literary, for which he was elected to membership in the Academy of History and the Academy of Spanish Languages.

His love for art and painting showed itself early in his life, and he perfected it with further study. An important personage once said of Cardinal Quintero: "It is difficult to tell whether this artist paints better with a brush or with a pen."

Ad Multos Annos. God grant him many years for Venezuela.

Carmen R. Montiel

There was the usual hospital routine this particular afternoon: doctors making rounds; nurses carrying out orders; *cafecitas* and juices being offered to patients; a group of ambulatory patients noisily playing dominoes on the large shaded verandah overlooking Lake Maracaibo. Then the alert came: "Something happened across the lake," which could only mean one thing—one of the oil wells had exploded.

OIL FIELD EMERG

Sister M. Madeline, R. N.

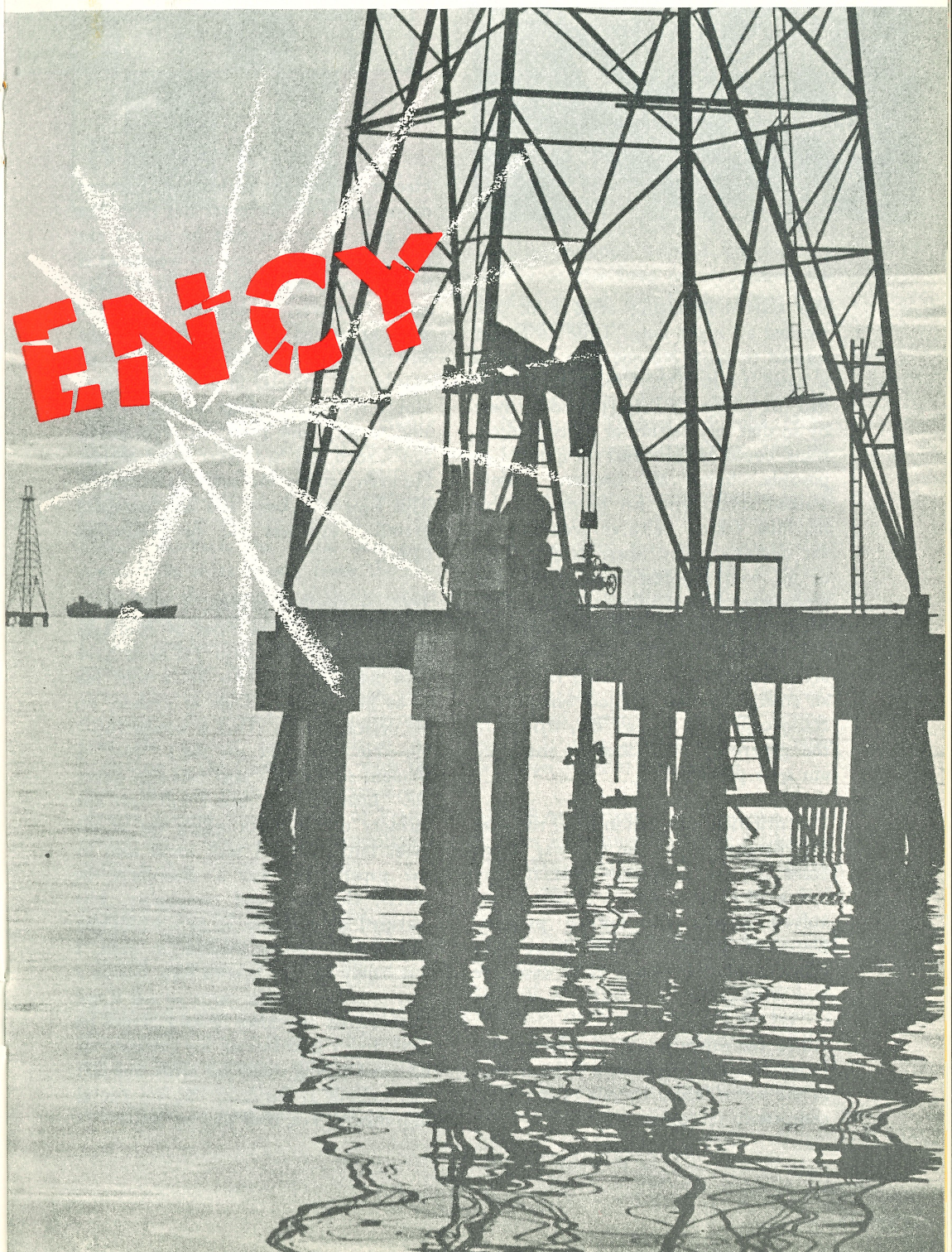
Our Lady of Coromoto Hospital, located in Maracaibo stands just "across the lake" from the huge oil fields and emergencies are transported to the hospital by a fast launch.

Lake Maracaibo has over 1800 wells. In many places the water is 100 feet deep but the company has long since mastered the art of sinking huge concrete piles and erecting drilling platforms with many safety measures included. One can easily imagine the dangers those working in this area face, when an emergency does occur—although they are really infrequent considering the thousands employed there. Now, there *was* an emergency!

Quickly, Sister Victoria, the receptionist, called me to the O.R. to prepare for the emergency. Ten men had been severely burned. The alert made all of us, Sisters, doctors, nurses, secretaries—the entire personnel feel that each had an important function.

Soon the ambulances arrived and it was gratifying to see such cooperation between medical and non-medical personnel. The secretaries received and tagged information on each man so that he could be identified properly in the O.R. The doctor in the emergency room determined which man was to be attended first in the O.R. Five Operating Rooms were prepared at once. The girl who cleans in the O.R. insisted upon staying right on because someone would have to clean up between operations. Each Sister and graduate nurse knew exactly what to do.

Drilling platform, Lake Maracaibo. In many places the water is 100 *feet deep. Lake Maracaibo has over* 1800 *oil wells.*



Hector, one of the patients, whose hands and face were severely burned, with Sister M. Madeleine and her guitar. His face healed beautifully, Coromoto Hospital, Maracaibo.

We started operating at 6 P.M. and worked all night long. Time no longer seemed to exist. No one even looked at a clock or had time to. Sister Joseph had her pharmacy helpers lined up near by so that more serum or other medications could be obtained as quickly as possible. Sister M. Leonard calmly walked about with her portable X-ray machine taking pictures according to the doctor's orders. Sister de Sales kept us all well supplied with coffee and sandwiches. The chaplain attended those who needed spiritual aid, and made himself available at any moment. We had often wondered what would happen in an emergency like this and whether we could cope with it—we did, thanks to the generosity and sacrifices made by our own personnel.

The situation was well in hand the next day. Strange to say, no one was absent from his job or place—even if they had worked all night . . . routines revolved around the burned patients. Dressings to be changed—more skin debridement . . . Long term case-care was anticipated.

All of the patients were severly burned. Extensive skin grafts were done as soon as the burns healed by one of our most competent surgeons.

Hector, one of the patients, had second degree burns of the hands and face. The sad part of it was that he played the guitar beautifully—and we wondered if his fingers would ever be able to play again. However, we kept him busy and when he seemed a little better I brought him my own guitar which I had learned to play by myself, in order to tempt him to try to play. Soon his fingers were able to pick and peck out Venezuelan tunes, such as I had never heard before. He even taught me some new chords. This kept him busy and also provided practical exercises for his withering hands.

Juan, is another patient, I will never forget. He was one mass of bandages from his feet to his head. He must have been handsome for his voice told me so as he pleaded, "Dios es grande, no me dejará morir." (God is wonderful—big—He won't let me die.) "*No,*" I thought to myself "*your soul will never die.*" Juan died . . . but I still have the memory of his voice telling me of his great faith. Later I read about him in the papers. He was a champion—in sports, character and personality. His pictured showed him to be a handsome and typical young Venezuelan man. I was happy to have known him. About a year later his mother came to ask if we remembered anything he said before he died, and I told her of my memory of his voice telling me of his faith. She left me, smiling as she said, "Si, eso fue el hijo mio." (Yes, *that* was my son.)

MISSION Books

Sister M. Fabian, B. A.

INDIA TODAY. Frank Moraes. N.Y. Macmillan. 248 pp. $4.00

With his usual insight and clarity Frank Moraes approaches the problems that have arisen in the twelve years of India's independence. Always realistic, and at the same time optimistic, Mr. Moraes discusses the social and economic difficulties arising from the historic past; the question of Communism in Kerala; the contribution of Mahatma Gandhi and his waning influence. When speaking of Mr. Nehru's eventual retirement, the suggestion is forwarded, that in future, the President of India may take the greater role which is his according to the Constitution, with the result that the important question will revolve around the successor of Prasad rather than Nehru. It is a stimulating question in a stimulating book.

CHINA TODAY. 64 pp. $1.00.
LATIN AMERICA TODAY. 68 pp. $1.00. Maryknoll Publications.

China and Latin America are added to Maryknoll's "World Family of Peoples" series. These classroom enrichment materials are aimed at the upper grade school level as background reading for geography classes. History, geography, social life and current affairs are considered. A collection of pictures and maps are included for bulletin boards.

EQUATORIAL AFRICA: The New World of Tomorrow. Glenn Kittler. N.Y. Nelson. 190 pp. $2.95.

Aimed at the juvenile reader, this study of contemporary Africa covers such topics as history, peoples, new independence movements, wildlife. Emphasizing Africa as the land of tomorrow, the land of change, Mr. Kittler shows both old and new.

RACE AND NATIONALISM: The Struggle for Power in Rhodesia-Nyasaland. Thomas M. Franck. N.Y., Fordham University Press. 369 pp. $6.75.

The rising national movements in all parts of Africa, with the accompanying racial conflicts that seem inseparable, have made us conscious of the problems facing the emerging world of Free Africa. Professor Franck offers more than mere observation. He presents a plan for social and economic development in the Federation of Rhodesia-Nyasaland within the existing framework. It is a scholarly and valuable work on African nationalism.

MUDRA: A Study of Symbolic Gestures in Japanese Buddhist Sculpture. E. Dale Saunders, N.Y., Pantheon. 296 pp. $7.50.

One in Pantheon's Bollington Series, Dr. Saunder's book is a detailed investigation of the symbolic gestures used in Buddhist ritual, as displayed in Japan's (and India's) art, particularly sculpture. Profusely illustrated, it will be of special interest in collections of oriental art.

Venezuelan Cuisine

Sister M. Genevieve, B. S. Dietetics

One of the important steps in adaptation to a new country consists in getting used to eating the native food. This can be a delightful experience but for most foreigners it amounts simply to acquiring new habits and developing new tastes.

A newcomer may be surprised at the great popularity, or rather the indispensability of warm food and drink in spite of the hot climate. The majority of Venezuelans in our hospital just love *hot* cereal every morning, *hot* soup twice a day, and a "cafecito" (a small cup of *hot* coffee with much sugar in it) before breakfast and between meals. You probably wonder what happens when ice cream appears on the menu? Well, surprisingly enough, nobody objects to it—only the small size.

The abundance and availability of fresh fruits and vegetables here make it possible to serve many "criollo" or local dishes. For instance, the lechosa or papaya is often used as breakfast fruit or served as dessert at other meals. However, it is at Christmas time that the papaya is prepared as the traditional item of Venezuelan cuisine: on Christmas Eve, almost everyone eats "dulce de lechosa"—sweet stewed papaya.

Bananas are cheap here and very popular. They come in a variety of sizes and colors which determine whether they are *bocadillos, guineos, topochos* or *quinientos*. Bocadillos are hardly bigger than a finger; guineos and topochos are short and chubby specimens, and quinientos are slimmer, longer and greener than other kinds of bananas and their flavor is sweeter. There is also another variety of fruit similar to bananas but much larger: the plaintain. When it is green and hard, it can be cut into small slices and fried: these chips are delicious. Or else, when the plantain is ripe and the skin is black, it can be baked and used as a starch substitute.

Sister M. Genevieve gets a lesson in making arepas (the "Venezuelan pancake" made with corn).

Among other fruits quite abundant on the market, we find pineapples, mangoes, oranges, lemons, guanabanas. As far as vegetables are concerned, we have almost the same variety as the North American markets offer, and as everywhere else, spinach is not very popular.

Corn meal is used extensively especially in the preparation of a "criolla" bun called "arepa." For some people, arepas are what bread is to us, but with the greater convenience of being heavier and more filling. The Venezuelans compare them to our pancakes but then they say: "Your American arepas don't stick to the ribs as much as ours!"

As in every country, special feasts call for special celebrations. At Christmas time, for instance, it is traditional here to serve "hallacas." This dish consists of a combination of meats and vegetables chopped finely and sprinkled with raisins, nuts and olives. This mixture is covered with a corn meal paste and the whole is wrapped up in banana leaves and neatly tied with strings. So when dinner time comes, all that one has to do is drop the little packages in boiling water for a few minutes and serve. Very delicious!

Venezuela: Spanish Capuchins make first immediate contact with fierce Motilones. Bishop Aurreocoechea (Capuchin) seen here visiting the Motilones. An old Indian feels the Bishop's hair and beard. He wanted to try on his glasses. The missionaries used the most modern means to introduce the Gospel to these as yet uncivilized people, who number between 2500 and 3000 souls.

MOTILON

MOTILONES . . . a people shrouded in the midst of centuries . . . Motilones . . . a word used synonymously with savage, fierce, ferocious . . . a word used to describe the savage or Indian who lives in the western part of Venezuela, just inside the natural mountainous country.

"The most illusive and fiercest savages known to man," the American Museum of Natural History described them. They had spent months attempting to ferret them out, to study their culture and language. They not only failed to see one, but were repaid for their interest by being nicked by arrows. The Indian shoots his six foot arrow with deadly accuracy—arrows that can penetrate a steel-mesh jacket made to stop a .45 calibre bullet. An employee of an oil company was found 70 feet inside a "protective" fence on the edge of the territory belonging to the Indians, with an arrow in his back. He never knew what hit him.

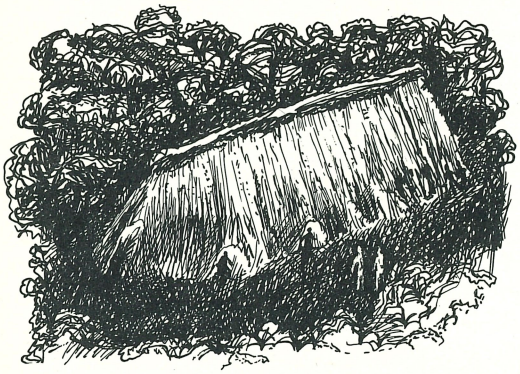
The origin of these people is believed to date back thousands of years, and yet, not much more was known about them, than had been known some four centuries ago, when they were forced into the forest because of the loss of land and the cruelties suffered at the hands of conquistadores, until an historic day in July, 1960.

On Tuesday, the 18th of July, 1960, between 10 and 11 a.m., the first face-to-face contact was made with these people by Venezuela itself in the person of Dr. Roberto Lizarralde of the Indian Commission. The Doctor and his pilot, climbed into a helicopter to begin what was to be the most important flight they had ever made over the forbidding Indian domain. Had those simple forest folk understood the picture message that had been dropped a few days before? Would they realize from that rude hieroglyphic-type note that these men in the strange shiny bird were actually friends and not foes? To their joy the two found that the instructions, rough-sketched though they were, had indeed been understood . . . the area surrounding the hut had been cleared of the two to six foot tree stumps which would have been a hazard for the helicopter and its occupants. Better still, there were the greatly feared Indians making friendly gestures indicating their desire to have their two visitors land.

A few days later, July 22nd, 1960, for the first time, after an interval of 139 years, the Spanish Capuchin missionaries of the vicariate apostolic of Machiques (Venezuela) renewed *direct* peaceful missionary contact with the Motilone Indians. Two missionaries — Fathers Vincente de Guesendos and Romauldo de Renedo — reached them by helicopter; and two others, Fathers Epifanio de Valdemorilla and Adolfo Villamanan — by land.

Behind these two historic meetings lay many years of missionary struggles and heroic work by the Capuchins. In 1499, the Motilones shot their first arrow at the Spanish conquerors who were under the leadership of Alonso de Ojeda. In 1694, when the mission of the Motilones was founded, they shot and killed Fray

Sister M. Patrice, R.N.



The bohio is a kind of ranch where several families live. The building is oval shape and looks, when seen from the air, like a giant overturned canoe. It is made with a framework of hard oak, covered with palm leaves, and has only two walls. It has five doors on each side and another at each end. In this particular bohio there were 60 people and a total of more than 100 people lived there. Within the communal scheme, each family has its own place.

Gregorio de Ibi. In 1772, Father Cesareo de Armellada achieved "real pacification of the Motilones," thanks to the combined action of Commander Sebastian Guillen, the Indian Jose Sebastian, who had been captured some years before, and who acted as interpreter, and the Capuchin missionary, Father Fidel de Rala. During the following twenty years, the Capuchin missionaries of Navarre and Valencia founded up to ten towns among the Motilone Indians and another thirty in the then province of Maracaibo, today the State of Zulia. A Motilone vocabulary, of the year 1788 remains to us, compiled by Father Francisco Javier de Alfaro. According to a census taken in 1810, the missionaries had, at that time, civilized 1,291 Motilone Indians!

On August 6th, 1821, with the Venezuelan War of Independence, the missions were suppressed. The Indians went into isolation again in the Selva, and hostilities broke out once more between them and the new colonizers.

The period 1821-1944 was one of alternate hope and tyranny. The Motilones who had been exploited by the civilized population, retired to their *bohios,* a type of ranch, and defended themselves with their arrows against the landowners whose plan it was, having hidden themselves in the Selva, to carry off the Indians to their own lands. Neither guns nor rifles cowed them; indeed, these things seemed only to add fuel to the fire of the Motilones' resistance.

Other efforts by the Capuchins towards contact had been made through a young Motilone man in the year 1938, and again, through the help of a Motilone girl, in 1940. On the only occasion, about 1956, when a Motilone was persuaded to accompany a missionary venture into his native territory — could not be brought to speak a single word.

In December, 1944, the Capuchin missionaries took charge once more of the vicariate apostolic of Machiques, and when an agreement had been made between them and the Venezuelan government, they decided once again to try to contact the Motilones. On October 2nd, 1945, the missionaries actually moved within range of the Indians' deadly arrows and founded a mission center, *Angeles de Tukuko,* a distance of some ten miles from the nearest Motilone *bohio.* The Indians came by night and stole salt, barbed wire, tools and all kinds of metals. The owners of the estates near the Motilones greeted them with shots; and the Indians replied with arrows. In the mission, the

Inside the communal dwelling, there are mats on the floor with cooking grills scattered here and there. The mats are probably where the mothers and small babies sleep, while above are hung hammocks of large sizes presumably for the men; still higher, hammocks for children old enough to climb up to them. The Motilones live by fishing and hunting. Fishing nets are hung in sacks on left.

Indians killed more than ten people, including a priest, Fray Primitivo de Nogarejas.

Then the plan for contact by air was put forward. This campaign consisted of aerial sorties over the Motilone *bohios* with the aim of throwing them "bombs of peace"—that is, objects which the Indians had shown they liked very much, such as metals, tools, clothes, toys; the campaign had the motto "Gifts break rocks." Two years later, on May 20th, 1947, the three "bombs of peace" which had been dropped, disappeared as if by magic; no Indians were seen. On December 26, 1947, during the fifth flight over the Motilone territory, the Indians allowed themselves to be seen in two *bohios*. Weekly flights were made. Up until June, 1949, which marked the end of the first stage, thirty-seven flights had been made in aircraft supplied by the National Government and by the petroleum companies. During these flights, it was seen that the Indians were not as antagonistic to the approach of the whites as they appeared to the rest of the world, and that their customs and social organization were different from those of the Hucpas or the Caribbean Motilones.

In August, 1950, at the request of the missionaries, the Command of the Aerial forces worked out a new plan. At first, two monthly flights, to be made in AT-11 planes, were arranged; later on, it was thought, helicopters would be more useful. The promised helicopters were not delivered; the consequences were that work was held up till 1954. In that year, the National Cartographic Department came to the rescue with two machines which the missionaries would be able to use for a time.

Then the Vicar Apostolic, Monsignor Aurrecoechea, and two other missionaries, in April, 1955, tried two expeditions *by land* which failed. Three more missionary stations were opened — on the road near the Motilone territory. These mission stations were a practical invitation to the Motilones to come and help themselves to the things they liked so much—clothing, salt, axes—left by the obliging missionaries, well within their reach; nocturnal raids on the Santa Rosa missions increased steadily.

After a few flights by the missionaries with the native commission, the missionaries by themselves at last embarked on the great decisive expedition. This expedition was a twofold one, by land and by helicopter. On July 20th, 1960, Fathers Epifanio de Valdemorilla and Adolfo de Villamanan, the land expeditionary force, set out for Motilonia,

while Fathers Romauldo and Vincente went to Maracaibo first to hire two helicopters at the cost of 380 bolivars an hour each. The direction taken by the helicopters showed those on land which road to follow in order to reach the first *bohio,* and, as they passed over it, the flying missionaries prepared the ground for their companions by throwing down "bombs of peace."

Just after eleven o'clock on July 22nd, the helicopter landed near the *bohio* it was making for; Father Romauldo, with the pilot's help, unfastened his safety belt and jumped down. The Indians remained, seemingly unmoved. When the missionary set foot on land, however, the majority, especially the women and children, fled to the protective surroundings of the *bohio.* "There remained on the spot," the chief actor in the drama tells us, "only a small group led by a white-headed old man—the only white-haired Indian that I have seen in my life as a missionary—and he had leprosy. I approached, and threw them everything I had, except my habit and missionary crucifix. I went towards them, smiling, making friendly gestures and they, without moving much, retreated as if they feared some treacherous blow. When Father Vicente jumped down a few minutes later, it was easier for the two of us to gain their confidence; and, little by little, they came near, although they were "still suspicious."

On July 23rd. a Saturday, the first Mass was celebrated on a rustic altar prepared near the *bohio.* On the altar, made out of four pitchforks which had been driven into the soil, a rod such as the Indians used for fishing, and table coverings, there was a crucifix and a small statue of Our Lady of Fatima. The tallest and oldest Motilone on the ranch held a great cross before the altar, made by the missionaries out of two tree trunks cut by the Motilones and tied in the middle by them. That cross stayed with the Motilones as a symbol of triumph and hope.

Far from being hostile, the first contact with the Motilones has shown that the ferocity of this race was not innate but was the effect of their struggle for existence, and that love and understanding overcome all difficulties. One of the members of the expedition says: "They are like big children." The men are of average height, athletic and well-proportioned. Their smooth skin is black and, in the case of most of them, jet black, hairless and cleanshaven. The women, generally smaller than average and a little plump, stayed shyly in the background, but it was noticed that they were unpainted, wore strings of animal teeth and small bones in wide collars about their necks—their only adornment. Their simple "dress" consisted of a piece of cloth woven in one piece, worn as a wrap-around, covering from waist to knees. The children were bare as the day they were born, and their typically swollen abdomens spoke eloquently of the prevalence of parasite infestation . . .

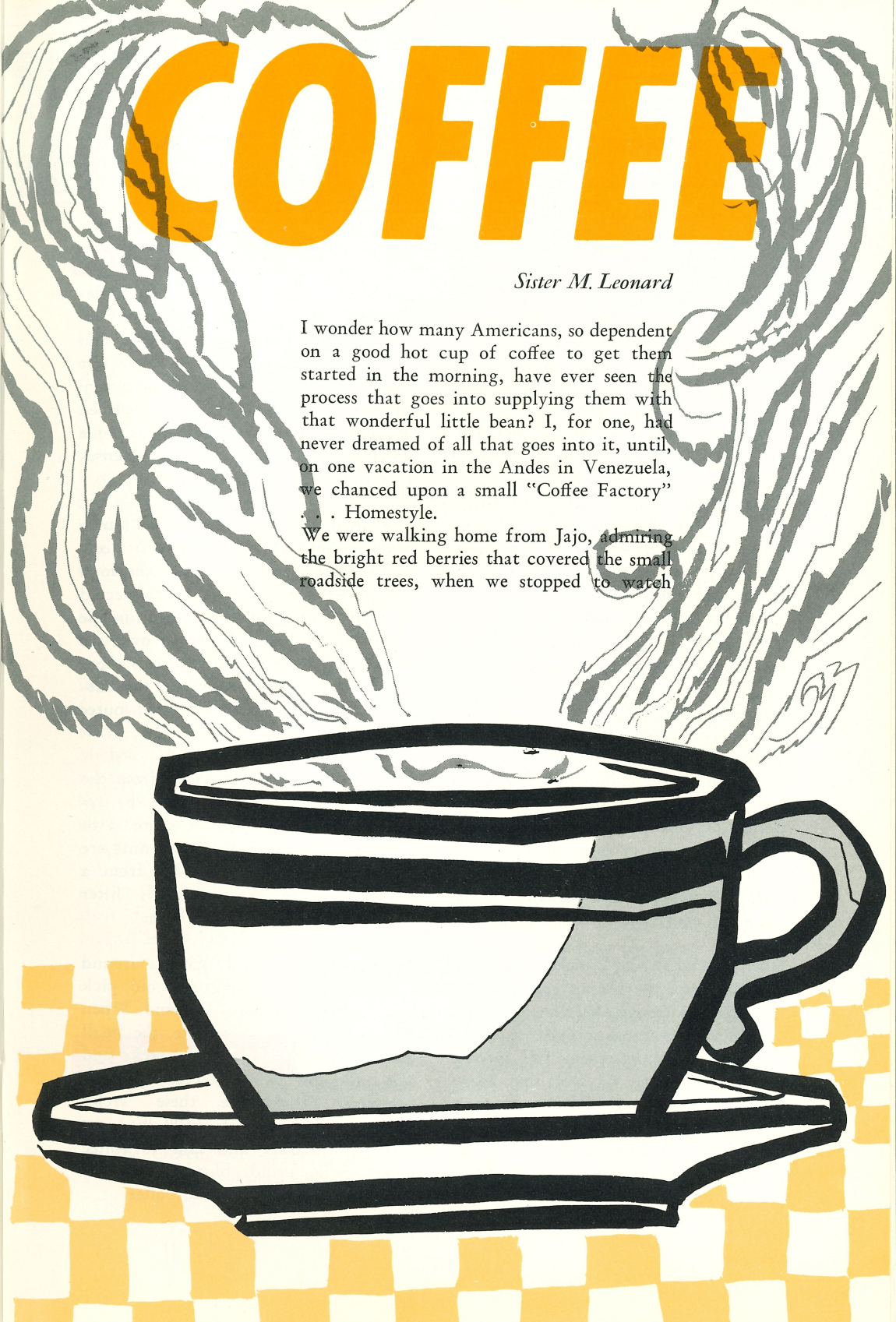
The Spanish Capuchin Fathers of the Vicariate Apostolic of Machiques, with the courage of the Gospel heroes, have opened Motilonia to peaceful association with the outside world. The fog is lifting . . . these children of the forest are slowly emerging . . . a kindly, friendly people. Due to the language barriers however, it will take much patience, observation and Christ-like understanding before they will be seen in all their God-given beauty in the clear brightness of a cloudless day.

COFFEE

Sister M. Leonard

I wonder how many Americans, so dependent on a good hot cup of coffee to get them started in the morning, have ever seen the process that goes into supplying them with that wonderful little bean? I, for one, had never dreamed of all that goes into it, until, on one vacation in the Andes in Venezuela, we chanced upon a small "Coffee Factory" . . . Homestyle.

We were walking home from Jajo, admiring the bright red berries that covered the small roadside trees, when we stopped to watch



a group of men working in an open patio. To our delight, they invited us in, and offered to give us a tour of their small coffee plantation, and explain the process of preparing the precious beans. The *dueno* or owner appeared, and conducted us through a maze of slender grey-barked trees, with shiny green leaves, planted about three feet apart in the shade of huge trees, commonly known as *café mamas*. Men were picking the dark red berries and letting them fall into small straw baskets tied to their waists. Usually, for three months of the year, late October till mid-December, coffee plants produce this colorful berry . . . (just in time to be a perfect substitute for holly for Christmas wreaths.) The trees require little care, reproducing easily, and having a long life span. Water and shade are available and the results are profitable. Basket after basket are emptied into the larger containers and hauled back to the patio.

Don Jorge, the *dueno,* told us that he had lived in Jajo for twenty years, continuing the business that his father had started. Even the children help in some part of the work, but most of the twenty or so workers that help him are from the pueblo or near vicinity. Jajo is a picturesque little pueblo of about 1,000 inhabitants, and situated 6,500 feet high, above the Rio Motatan.

When the whole day's picking is gathered together, the berries are fed into a funnel-like trough, between two rollers which are hand-cranked to mash the berries and let them fall into a cement tank about six feet deep. Here the crushed berries are left two days to soak in several feet of water, so that, when the water is siphoned off, the fruit portion of the berry will float off, leaving the center or nut containing the coffee bean. We were worried about what would happen if some unripe berries were picked with the rest, but our concerned was soon allayed. During the next process of drying the nut, those that are green, turn black and are discarded.

Drying usually takes several days, depending upon the weather. The nuts are spread out on the patio floor in the sun and raked over every two hours. It takes four days of sun to properly dry the nut. Each evening they are replaced in bags, because when the clouds come down in the afternoon, the condensation is like a very heavy dew.

The dried nuts are then poured into a circular cement basin about a foot deep. A huge stone, four or five feet high and at least a foot wide, is connected to a pivot attached to a support in the center of the basin. A pair of oxen are yoked to the pivot and with their super strength, force the stones over the nut-filled basin, crushing the hard outer shell of the nut.

In order to separate the shell from the bean, they make a large sieve, by replacing the bottom of a crate with screening. Slowly, the cracked nuts are fed into the sieve, suspended from a rope, and the cracked shells filter through, leaving the tiny bean.

Then the whole family gathers around the table where young and old pick out the defective beans by hand. When this final process is complete, the small grey beans are poured into sacks and and only now is our factory product complete. From here, these sacks, usually containing 50K (100 lbs.) are carted to market and sold to coffee makers who grind, blend, and roast them, to make your special coffee.

NEWS FROM OUR HOUSES

EAST PAKISTAN: Tornado Hits Mission

On March 19th a violent tornado struck the Catholic villages south of Dacca. In the village of Golla, Benediction services were just finishing on Sunday afternoon, and the people stayed inside because of the rain. In three minutes, it was all over. Thirty-two people were killed and scores, injured. The church roof was gone, the walls collapsed. Several villages with hundreds of houses were flattened.

Medical Mission Sisters, two doctors and two nurses were rushed, by helicopters, to the scene of the disaster: Mother M. Benedict, M.D., who had just arrived for visitation, Sister M. Christine, M.D., Sister M. George, R.N., and Sister M. Michaela, R.N. They assisted the victims and brought back to Dacca the most seriously injured. Among these were twenty-six patients with fractures of the spine, pelvis, arms and legs. The patients had to be taken two by two in the helicopter down to a launch, then down the river three hours to Holy Family Hospital, Dacca.

SISTER M. MICHAELA, R.N.
Holy Family Hospital
Dacca, East Pakistan

WEST PAKISTAN: We Meet the Queen

We did not have to go to London to see the Queen, she came to Karachi. The city took on a new look. Buildings were repainted, streets repaired and all were excited in anticipation of the coming visit. The ovation on the day of the Queen's arrival was tremendous and several of us watched the parade. She was naturally gracious and charming and seemed to be delighted to be in Karachi. The weather was warm and sunny. Being citizens of the Commonwealth, Sister Cajetan (from England) and I (from Canada) received an invitation to attend a Reception at the President's State Guest House in honour of Her Majesty, the Queen.

The day of the Reception arrived and the skies were grey and overcast. It never rains in Karachi in February. This time all records were broken and it literally poured. However, not even the rain deterred us from going. Two Sisters, Daughters of the Cross, (both from England), picked us up in their van. By now it was teeming and there were four of us on an outing to see the Queen. No doubt the Queen felt right at home as it was typical English weather.

The entire Reception was to take place outdoors under a *shamiana* (covering overhead to protect the guests from the sun). We arrived early and were told to make ourselves at home as the arrangements were uncertain because of the rain. The guests totalled 1400 in all. Since the outdoor arrangements could not be used, all the guests had to be housed indoors somehow; and you can imagine how crowded the guest house was! As we were chatting with friends in a large room with chandeliers and spotlights, a gentleman asked us if

we would mind going upstairs as the room was getting hot and crowded. He assured us the Queen would also go upstairs. Dubiously, we marched along. The Queen was twenty minutes late due to the rain. In the meantime, another friend came up to inform us that the Queen would not come this way at all! So off we went looking for a place where we *could* see the Queen. As we wandered down the steps we saw an empty corridor near the elevator and were informed that the Queen would take the elevator to the top floor where she would pause for refreshments. Here we stayed until she came.

Her arrival was finally announced. It took almost another hour for all the presentations of high officials from various countries to take place. Suddenly after a lull, the Queen was spied by one of the folks in the corridor. We knew she was drawing closer as we saw the ladies curtsy. It was optional to curtsy, as the Pakistani dress would not lend itself to this graceful custom. So we were safe in our habits—besides, I had not the slightest idea which foot went forward first and this was not the time to practice. "Just a few more minutes and she will be around the corner," said the gentleman beside me, "Make way now for the Queen and the Duke followed by the entourage."

Make way? Where to, there was no space to take a step backwards or forwards. She looked gay wearing her crown and jewels and in a very natural, pleasant way greeted her subjects. Suddenly she saw the four Sisters and without hesitation came forward to greet us and have a chat with us. I seemed to be the only one with the power of speech. I was hoping someone would add a word or two, when I finally heard the other Sisters chime in. Indeed we felt honoured and the Queen, after telling us how pleased she was that she met us, got on the elevator. In all this excitement, the Duke came along in a very jovial mood. He too, exchanged a few words with the crowd nearby and then just as the Queen did, came up to us and had a longer chat. The other Sisters being accustomed to royalty by now, joined in the conversation and we spent a few pleasant minutes.

The entourage proceeded up the steps and this gave Sister Cajetan and I a few minutes to relax as by now we were on cloud number nine. No sooner were we at ease when the Queen returned on the elevator. As we were craning our necks to get the last glimpse of the sovereign, another party was upon us. Who should pass by at the opportune moment but President Ayub Khan of Pakistan! He shook hands with me, saying how nice it was to see us here. Indeed I felt most honoured, as I was the only privileged guest who received a handshake. The Queen and party left and all was over except the excitement. The folks around us thanked *us* for coming as it gave *them* a few longer moments in the presence of the Queen.

On reaching home we related the events of the evening and added, "This evening we saw everyone, Queen, Duke and President; all that was missing was the Pope."

Sister M. Brigetta, B.S.N.
Holy Family Hospital
Karachi, W. Pakistan

VIETNAM: The Fine Art of Chopsticks

One evening, before we left Vietnam, Mother M. Benedict, Sister M. Karen and I were invited out for dinner by Therese, a lovely Vietnamese woman

who works for the N.C.W.C. in Saigon. Msgr. Harnett, Father Duchesne, M.M. and Marion McGillicuddy, all of N.C. W.C. were invited also. Therese lives in a lovely one-story cement home with her sister. Both Therese and her sister dress in the traditional Vietnamese fashion similar to that seen in China — a wide trouser like underpiece covered with a long ankle-length dress, slit on either side from the waist down. It is very graceful.

It promised to be a most enjoyable evening, as we said grace, and took our places at the table. Being a real Vietnamese dinner, there were no knives, forks and spoons on the table . . . You guessed it, Chop Sticks!

I knew then, only too late, that I should have practiced beforehand. Sister M. Karen had it all over us as she had practiced several times before. But for Mother and me, it was either learn or starve, and since dinner was already at a late hour, I was in no position to pass up food because of a utensil.

Father Duchesne, an expert at this, took us under his wing and began to explain the intrinsic art of eating with two pieces of wood. First, you place chop stick number one against your third finger and hold it firm with your thumb. Holding this one firm, is the key to successful chop stick eating, or so we were told. Next, chop stick number two is held loosely with the same thumb and the next two fingers. This one, it seems, does all the work. It must never cross over and both must be of equal length at all times or you could have disastrous results, especially when wearing a freshly starched white habit.

Now comes the first course and the test. You pick up your chop sticks which are resting on a small holder to the left of your plate. (I didn't have to because I never put mine down for fear of not being able to get them in the proper position when the time came). Father Duchesne demonstrated, everyone else watched, and you tried as gracefully as possible to keep from dropping food all over you and the table. Needless to say, if you were self-conscious, you didn't have a chance. First of all you took a small lettuce leaf from a platter in the center of the table, and put it on your plate. Next you took a smaller sausage affair cooked in dough, much like a pig in a blanket, only much smaller, dipped it in some dressing which was in a small dish by your place, and then tried to wrap the sausage in the lettuce leaf and eventually get it into your mouth—and all this with chop sticks, mind you!

Well, after several attempts, when you just began to get the knack of it, it was time for one of the other ten or so, courses and you had to learn a new phase of this fine art. Each course seemed to get harder and require more skill in using the chop sticks. Some were slippery, some had to be cut, etc. The easiest thing to eat by far was the rice. You pick up the small bowl containing it with three fingers of one hand and put it right against your lower lip. Then you take the chop sticks in your other hand and literally push the rice into your mouth. By the time the meal was over I felt much more at home with chop sticks and wasn't half as hungry as I expected to be. All in all, everything turned out "tot Laum" or very well, and we had acquired a new skill, thanks to Father Duchesne.

SISTER M. BERCHMANS
(Sister M. Berchmans is accompanying Mother M. Benedict on a visitation to the missions.)

VENEZUELA: The Language of Charity

There is no choice here — either you learn the language or live in the world of the deaf-mute. With that realization to spur me on, I buried myself in my Spanish books each afternoon—one hour of class and three hours of study.

If I ever prayed for the "Gift of Tongues," it was in caring for Nelson, an eight year old boy with terminal cancer. He cried out almost constantly, *Hermana, Hermanita,* (Sister, Sister) and it was impossible to pass his door without his calling for me. I would always go in and even if I knew what he wanted, I found it very difficult to comfort him in Spanish. There is a language other than words, however, and soon we were the best of friends. When he felt a little better, he would speak very slowly and clearly and try to help me speak.

God seems to have special graces for such little children and Nelson was able to receive his First Holy Communion the morning of his operation. From then on, no matter how ill he was, he would ask each day to be taken to chapel for a visit to the Blessed Sacrament. On the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, I gave him a little rosary. Although suffering a great deal, he still asked to go to chapel for Rosary and Benediction. During the singing of the Lourdes' hymn, in Spanish, I couldn't help thinking what a miniature Lourdes our chapel was at that moment.

SISTER M. JANET, R.N.
Coromoto Hospital
Maracaibo, Venezuela

VENEZUELA: Bath-robed Choir

We're having our annual May crowning of Our Lady at the end of the month. The May Queen has been elected and she and her "court" are busy getting themselves rehearsed for the affair. We have a "living" Rosary with Father giving short explanations of each mystery; then Our Lady is crowned by the May Queen, who also recites an Act of Consecration; and the program closes with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament out-of-doors. Sister Stephen recites the Rosary with the patients every day, and she has now taught them several hymns to Our Lady. We're thinking of inviting them to be the "choir" for the night, with a little support from the Sisters. They'll love it—and it'll be interesting to have a "bath-robed" choir!

Our Lady of Coromoto Hospital
Maracaibo, Venezuela

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the medical past of PERU

Ancient Peru seems to have outstripped other South American countries in regard to medical achievements. Fortunately for medical historians, the Peruvians exhibited an almost morbid inclination to picture disease on their pottery; and the artistic representations thereon indicate that surgery was highly developed. The Peruvians practiced trephining (surgical opening of the skull), amputation and excision of tumors. As in other parts of South America, the heads of ants were used as clamps in sutures.

Peruvian medicine was not exclusively "scientific," however. Gods and sorcerers were considered to be disease-causing agents, and the rite of transference of disease to animals seems to have been particularly widespread. This transference was practiced particularly on the guinea pig—a fact that indicates that the medical role of this unfortunate animal was an ancient one. The Peruvian concept of disease-bringing winds was developed into the more scientific observation of the seasonal occurrence of disease.

The totalitarian Inca state was able to accomplish much in the field of public health. An annual health ceremony provided for a thorough cleaning of all homes. The state made provision for the upkeep and employment of the aged and the crippled; marriage of the crippled was restricted. Alcoholism and drug addiction were energetically fought.

Transfer of populations on a large scale existed among the Incas, but it was accomplished with hygienic insight. People were moved only to places whose climate corresponded to those of former settlements.

Peru contributed both cocaine and Peruvian balm to our pharmacopoeia. This highly developed civilization also left impressive ruins of baths and sewage systems.

Abstracted from "Short History of Medicine" By E. H. Ackerknecht, M.D., Ronald Press Co., N.Y.

Mary in the Gospels

ONE OF A SERIES

And on the third day a marriage took place at Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there . . . And the wine having run short, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine". And Jesus said to her, "What wouldst thou have me do, woman? My hour hast not yet come". His mother said to the attendants, "Do whatever He tells you."

JOHN 2:1-5